No. 79
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A SUPERMAN PUBLICATION
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ACTION

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Action Comics

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ACTION COMICS, No. 74, December, 1943, published monthly by Detective Comics, Inc., 480 Lexington Ave., New York 17, N. Y. F. E. Ellsworth, Editor. Entered as Second Class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Yearly subscription in the U. S. A. $1.50 including postage. For advertising rates address Richard A. Feldon & Co., 420 Lexington Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

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Printed in U.S.A.

SUPERMAN
by JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER
WILBUR, BLACK SHEEP OF THE WOLFINGHAM CLAN-- HAT PUDGY PRACTITIONER OF THE ANCIENT ART OF PAINLESSLY EXTRACTING CASH FROM THE GULLIBLE-- ABANDONS A FLOCK OF SHORN LAMBS IN METROPOLIS TO CLIP HIMSELF A CROOKED FORTUNE IN THE WOOL-PRODUCING LANDS OF THE WEST, BUT ALL HIS WILES CANNOT PULL THE WOOL OVER THE EYES OF SUPERMAN, WHO ALTERNATES AMAZING FEATS OF STRENGTH AND SPEED WITH CERTAIN WILES OF HIS OWN TO BRING FORTUNE OUT OF DISASTER IN THE GIGANTIC FRAUD OF--
"The Golden Fleece!"

THE RAGS-TO-RICHES INVESTMENT SERVICE IS A NEW ENTERPRISE IN METROPOLIS, AND A SUCCESSFUL ONE, FROM THE BEGINNING...
THIS $300 IS ALL THAT'S LEFT OF POOR ARTHUR'S INSURANCE! ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN INVEST IT SAFELY?
DEAR LADY, YOU HAVE MY GILT-EDGED GUARANTEE TO INCREASE IT TEN-FOLD WITHIN TEN DAYS! SURELY YOU WOULDN'T DOUBT MY WORD!
MY LIFE'S SAVINGS! I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO IF I LOST IT!
HAVE NO FEAR, SIR! I PERSONALLY WILL SEE THAT IT PRODUCES 1000 PERCENT PROFIT IN TEN DAYS!
BUT WAIT! HAVEN'T WE SEEN THIS CHUBBY, IF NOT CHERUBIC COUNTENANCE BEFORE?
TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS! HOW SIMPLE FOR A MAN OF MY GENIUS TO SUCCEED IN LIFE, AS LONG AS PEOPLE ARE EVEN MORE SIMPLE!
NOW TO KEEP MY WORD AND INCREASE THIS MONEY TEN TIMES... BUT FAR FROM HERE, AND FOR THE SOLE BENEFIT OF MYSELF, THE ONE AND ONLY WILBUR WOLFINGHAM!
LOIS LANE IS ON THE TRAIL OF A STORY ABOUT THE RAGS-TO-RICHES FIRM...
(- SOUNDS LIKE FRENZIED FINANCE TO ME, OR ELSE JUST PLAIN ROBBERY. BUT I'LL HAVE TO TALK TO WHOEVER IS BEHIND IT BEFORE I CAN DECIDE WHICH.'—)
IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE FROM RAGS TO RICHES Come in
(- OH, OH- WOLFINGHAM! THAT'S ALL I NEED TO KNOW.'—)
IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE FR RAGS TO RICHES Come in
MINUTES LATER, IN THE NEWSROOM OF THE DAILY PLANET...
GUESS WHAT, CLARK! I'M GOING TO WRITE A STORY TELLING THE WORLD THAT WILBUR WOLFINGHAM, THE SWINDLER, IS BEHIND THAT NEW GET-RICH-QUICK INVESTMENT SERVICE!
DID YOU SAY WOLFINGHAM?

EXIT CLARK KENT, MILD-MANNERED REPORTER, TO REAPPEAR NEXT MOMENT AS--
(LOIS DOESN'T SEEM TO REALIZE THAT WOLFINGHAM MAY NOT HANG AROUND LONG ENOUGH TO BE EXPOSED. IF ONLY HE HASN'T RUN OUT ALREADY.)
HE HAS!
SUPERMAN!
IF HE LEFT ANY EVIDENCE BEHIND, IT SHOULD BE HERE!
COPIES OF THE CONTRACTS HE GAVE HIS VICTIMS! BUT THEY WON'T HELP LOCATE THE FAT CROOK WHO HAS THEIR MONEY!
ON A PULLMAN PARLOR-ROOM OF THE SUNSET LIMITED...
SOMETIMES I AM AMAZED AT MY OWN INGENUITY! THOUSANDS HAVE TRAVELED WEST IN SEARCH OF GOLD, BUT I AM UNDOUBTEDLY THE FIRST TO TAKE THE GOLD WITH ME!
TWO DAYS LATER; IN A TOWN WHICH IS THE CENTER OF THE WESTERN SHEEP COUNTRY...
(HARD TIMES HAVE HIT THIS SECTION, IF WHAT I HAVE HEARD IS TRUE--AND WHERE BUSINESS IS BAD, THERE WILBUR WOLFINGHAM PROSPERS BEST.)
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE LICKED, HANK! NO RAIN FOR TWO MONTHS--GRASS DRYIN' UP--WATER HOLES GETTIN' EMPTY--
I'D SELL MY LAND FOR A PLUGGED NICKEL, IF I COULD FIND ANYBODY FOOL ENOUGH TO BUY IT!
(THOSE WORDS ARE SWEET MUSIC TO MY EARS.)

IN A RENTED FLIVVER, WOLFINGHAM SEEKS AN OLD-TIME PROSPECTOR OF WHOM HE HAS HEARD...
THAT MUST BE HOPEFUL JOHN'S PLACE. IN MY PROFESSION, A MAN KNOWN AND TRUSTED BY THE PEOPLE OF A COMMUNITY IS ALWAY THE BEST ALLY TO HAVE.
SURE, I'LL MAKE A PROSPECTIN' TRIP WITH YE. IN 20 YEARS I AIN'T FOUND A SPECK O' GOLD IN THESE PARTS, BUT I AIM TO KEEP TRYIN' LONG AS I LIVE.
I, SIR, AM AN EMINENT GEOLOGIST; AND HAVE REASON TO SUSPECT THAT THERE ARE RICH DEPOSITS IN THIS VICINITY.
AMONG THE ROCKY FOOTHILLS OF GREAT MOUNTAINS, WHERE FLOCKS OF SHEEP GRAZE...
THESE ARE LIKELY-LOOKING ROCKS, HOPEFUL JOHN! LET US EXAMINE THEM.
IF YE SAY SO -- BUT I'M TELLING YE, IT AIN'T NO USE.
I BEEN OVER THIS LAND SO OFTEN, TH' SHEEP THINK I'M ONE O' 'EM. I NEVER COULD FIND A TRACE O' GOLD.
IS THAT SO?
THEN WHAT'S THAT?
HUH?.. GLORY BE.
THAT NIGHT, AT A MEETING OF THE SHEEPMEN'S ASSOCIATION...
GOLD! AT LAST, I'VE FOUND IT. HALLELUJAH!
NOT SO LOUD, JOHN! IT ISN'T OURS YET -- NOT TILL I'VE BOUGHT THE LAND FROM THE SHEEPMEN! WE MUST KEEP IT A DEEP, DARK SECRET FOR THE PRESENT.
FRIENDS, THIS HERE STRANGER HAS OFFERED US $10,000 FOR OUR GRAZIN' LAND! RECKON IF HE'S IDJIT ENOUGH TO PAY IT, WE'RE SMART ENOUGH TO TAKE IT.
ME, I'LL SELL.
ME, TOO!

SO IT IS THAT, IN DUE TIME, EXCITING NEWS REACHES METROPOLIS
LOIS! CLARK! LISTEN TO THIS! THERE'S A NEW GOLD RUSH OUT WEST-- THE BIGGEST SINCE THE DAYS OF '49!
WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO DO-- DASH OUT AND STAKE YOUR CLAIM?
I WANT YOU TO CHARTER A PLANE AND GET OUT THERE FAST! IT OUGHT TO MAKE A WHALE OF A STORY!
LEAVE IT TO US, CHIEF! WE'LL MAKE THE OLD YARNS ABOUT THE YUKON RUSH, SEEM TAME!
AND PRESENTLY...
THIS IS THE PLACE!
LOOK AT THAT CROWD TRYING TO BUY SHARES IN THE BIG STRIKE!
SORRY, FOLKS! THE LAND'S ALL SOLD!
CLARK-- DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?
IF IT ISN'T THE BIG, BAD WOLFINGHAM! I'M A PRAIRIE WILDFLOWER!
WELL, WELL-- (=GULP!=)-- MY GOOD FRIENDS, CLARK KENT AND LOIS LANE! A SMALL WORLD, ISN'T IT? HA, HA!
SWINDLE? ER-- AREN'T YOU A TRIFLE HASTY, MISS LANE? I-ER- STILL HAVE SEVERAL HOURS TO FULFILL MY CONTRACTS WITH METROPOLIS CLIENTS! AND GOLD WAS FOUND ON THIS LAND NOT BY ME, BUT BY AN EXPERIENCED PROSPECTOR!
SO THIS GOLD RUSH IS JUST ANOTHER SWINDLE OF YOURS-- LIKE THE RAGS-TO-RICHES INVESTMENT SERVICE!
(=HMMM... ON THE SURFACE, HE'S ABSOLUTELY RIGHT!=)
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(BUT WHENEVER WOLFINGHAM MAKES A STATEMENT, THE PLACE TO LOOK FOR THE TRUTH IS BENEATH THE SURFACE.)
WAIT TILL THE PLANET PRINTS THE TRUTH ABOUT YOU!
IF YOUR PAPER SHOULD BE SO FOOLISH AS TO SLANDER ME, I SHALL SUE!
(HERE'S WHERE SUPERMAN GETS DOWN TO BEDROCK!)
LIKE A STEEL-NOSED SHELL FROM A CANNON, THE MIGHTY MAN OF TOMORROW PLUNGES INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH!
BURROWING THROUGH STRATA OF SOLID ROCK, HE TURNS HIS PHENOMENAL X-RAY VISION TO RIGHT AND LEFT...
(INTERESTING FORMATIONS IN THESE HILLS!)
LISTEN TO ME, GENTLEMEN--AND MISS LANE--AND WOLFINGHAM!
(THIS QUARTZ IS PRETTY--BUT VALUELESS!)
WHA--! SUPERMAN!

YOU CAN TAKE MY WORD THAT THERE ISN'T AN OUNCE OF GOLD WITHIN TEN MILES OF THIS SPOT--AND IF THERE EVER WAS ANY, IT WAS DELIBERATELY PLACED THERE BY SOMEONE!
I-I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
YES, YOU CAN--AND SO CAN I! SUPERMAN ALWAYS KNOWS WHAT HE'S TALKIN' ABOUT!
FOR YOUR INFORMATION, WILBUR WOLFINGHAM IS ONE OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS FLIMFLAM ARTISTS OF OUR CENTURY!
SUPERMAN, HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH AN UNKIND THING?
LIKE A VENGEFUL TIDE, THE CROWD'S ANGER RISES AGAINST THE ROLY-POLY CROOK! HE KNEW WE'D SELL AT ANY PRICE! HE BOUGHT OUR LAND CHEAP--AND TRICKED US INTO BUYIN' IT BACK AT TEN TIMES THE PRICE!
LYNCH HIM!
I AM AFRAID, MY FRIENDS, THAT I MUST DISAPPOINT YOU AGAIN!
YOU SEE, MY FRIENDS DO NOT WISH ME TO BE THE GUEST OF HONOR AT A NECKTIE PARTY!
HIRED GUNMEN! WE CAN'T FIGHT 'EM!
OH, IF ONLY SUPERMAN HAD WAITED!
MEANWHILE, OUT OF SIGHT IN THE CLOUDLESS SKY, SUPERMAN SURVEYS THE SCENE WITH TELESCOPIC EYES.
SO WOLFINGHAM HAS BODYGUARDS! WELL, SINCE NO ONE IS LIKELY TO BE SHOT OR LYNCHED IMMEDIATELY, I'LL TAKE CARE OF A COUPLE OF LITTLE CHORES BEFORE I TAKE CARE OF THEM!
FIRST TO END THE DROUGHT THAT THREATENS TO RUIN THIS COUNTRY! THE MOUNTAINS DEFLECT THE AIR CURRENTS TO KEEP RAIN CLOUDS AWAY, BUT THERE'S A STORM ON THE OTHER SIDE!

WHAT COULD BE MORE REASONABLE THAN TO SET UP NEW AIR CURRENTS AND DRAW THE STORM THIS WAY?
RACING WITH TERRIFIC SPEED IN A PURPOSEFUL PATTERN, SUPERMAN PERFORMS THE INCREDIBLE FEAT OF ALTERING THE WIND DIRECTIONS OF AN ENTIRE SECTION OF THE COUNTRY!
I'M DOING THIS FOR THE SHEEP AS MUCH AS FOR THE SHEEPMEN WITHOUT RAIN, THEY'D ALL DIE SOON!
MOMENTS LATER...
LOOK! RAIN CLOUDS!
AT LEAST WE OWN THE LAND AGAIN AND THE SHEEP WILL BE SAVED
THEY CAN KEEP THEIR RANCHES, AS LONG AS I KEEP THE $100,000 I'VE COLLECTED
THE THUNDERSTORM BREAKS AND SCATTERS THE CROWD!
I'M HEADIN' BACK FOR TOWN!
WHERE'S CLARK? HE PROBABLY WON'T HAVE SENSE ENOUGH TO GET OUT OF THE RAIN!
MISS LANE, LET ME CARRY YOU THE SHORT DISTANCE TO MY HEADQUARTERS!
I'D RATHER SHARE AN UMBRELLA WITH A SKUNK--BUT I HAVEN'T AN UMBRELLA
FLAMING LIGHTNING STABS STRAIGHT FOR THE SHEET METAL ROOF OF WOLFRAM-HAM'S SHACK
BUT, DIVING WITH A SPEED THAT SURPASSES THAT OF LIGHT, THE MAN OF STEEL BECOMES A LIGHTNING-ROD TO DEFLECT THE BOLT INTO THE EARTH!
THAT'S THAT! AND IF IT'S TRUE THAT LIGHTNING NEVER STRIKES TWICE IN THE SAME PLACE, LOIS AND THE OTHERS WILL BE SAFE WHILE I PERFORM ANOTHER LITTLE CHORE!
GREAT SCOTT--LIGHTNING IS GOING TO HIT THAT SHACK UNLESS I CAN INTERCEPT IT AND LOIS IS INSIDE
LAMBS FOR SALE
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LIKE A HUMAN METEOR, SUPERMAN STREAKS EASTWARD TOWARD METROPOLIS...
NEARLY TIME FOR WOLFINGHAM TO PAY OFF HIS RACKETEERS! LUCKY I TOOK THE TROUBLE TO MEMORIZE THEIR NAMES AND ADDRESSES!
SUPERMAN! WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?
TO COLLECT A THOUSAND PERCENT FOR THE MONEY YOU INVESTED A FEW DAYS AGO! THIS WILKINS
BUT HE SAID HE'D BRING THE MONEY TO ME!
I KNOW! BUT SINCE WOLFINGHAM IS GOING TO HAVE SO MUCH TROUBLE SO VERY SOON, WHY MAKE HIM ANY MORE THAN NECESSARY?
AT A RAILROAD SIDING ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY...
ALL ABOARD THE CROSS-COUNTRY COLLECTION SPECIAL!
BUT THERE ISN'T ANY LOCOMOTIVE!
AND NOW--THE SWIFTEST RAIL TRIP EVER RECORDED!
A LOCOMOTIVE WOULD JUST BE A NUISANCE! HOW WOULD IT PASS THAT STREAMLINER AHEAD, DOING A MERE NINETY MILES AN HOUR!
PARDON MY DUST!
SUPERMAN! NOW I'VE SEEN EVERYTHING!
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WOLFINGHAM AND HIS TWO-GUN GANGSTERS PREPARE TO FLEE AS THE STORM PASSES OVER, HAVING FILLED WATER-HOLES AND STREAMS AND REFRESHED THE GRAZING LAND . . .
AND NOW, MY DEAR MISS LANE, FAREWELL.'
I'M AFRAID, MA'AM, SUPERMAN'S MORE SKEERED O'US THAN YOU ARE.'
YOU WOULDN'T GET AWAY WITH THIS IF SUPERMAN HADN'T RUN OUT ON ME
SUDDENLY . . .
HUH! . . COME ON, BOYS . . WE'LL SMOKE HIM OUT.'
NOT SO SCARED AS YOU MIGHT THINK'
OH, DEAR
CLANK
LOOK - HE SHEDS LEAD LIKE WATER' I HEARD ABOUT IT BUT I NEVER BELIEVED IT TILL NOW
BUT BE CAREFUL YOU DON'T HIT YOUR PALS'
LET THEM HIT YOU, INSTEAD
AH, ME . . THAT THIS SHOULD HAPPEN, AFTER ALL MY HARD WORK'
YOU'VE DONE IT AGAIN, SUPERMAN'
DON'T HIT ME, SUPERMAN . . PLEASE'
HIT YOU? OF COURSE NOT! I HAVE AN EVEN MORE PAINFUL EXPERIENCE IN STORE FOR YOU! . . . WANT TO COME ALONG, LOIS?
WHAT DO YOU THINK
AT THE RAILROAD STATION IN TOWN . .
RECOGNIZE THEM, WOLFINGHAM? YOU CAN PAY THEM OFF VOLUNTARILY TEN DOLLARS FOR ONE . . OR GO TO PRISON AND LET THE COURTS PAY IT'
THIS IS THE CRUELLEST BLOW OF ALL
AND THE BIGGEST STORY I'VE HAD IN MONTHS!

YOU MAY MARK THIS DOWN AS THE SADDEST HOUR IN WILBUR WOLFINGHAM'S LONG AND LAWLESS LIFE.'
THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THREE HUNDRED' MR. WOLFINGHAM, YOU'RE AN HONEST MAN'
I KNOW (SIGH) PLEASE DON'T REMIND ME OF IT'
LOOK.' IT'S OUR MONEY HE'S PAYING OUT TO THEM CITY FOLKS.'
AND THE SHEEPMEN ARE SCARCELY HAPPIER ABOUT IT THAN THE SWINDLER HIMSELF'
I'VE BEEN ROBBED-- SWINDLED-- DILKED-- FLIMFLAMMED!
LISSEN AT HIM' HOW ABOUT US?
SUPERMAN SAVED OUR SHEEP --BUT WE'RE PLUMB CLEANED OUT O' CASH
TAKE IT EASY, MEN' YOU MADE A FAIR BARGAIN WHEN YOU SOLD YOUR LAND AND BOUGHT IT BACK AGAIN-- AND A GOOD ONE
WHAT'S THIS?
I EXAMINED THE SUB-STRATA OF THIS DISTRICT AND I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT IT CONTAINS PRECIOUS METALS WORTH HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS, IF NOT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS
BUT- BUT YUH SAID--
I SAID THERE WAS NO GOLD-- AND THERE ISN'T BUT THERE ARE SOME OF THE RICHEST SILVER [illegible] HAVE EVER HEARD OF
NO' NO' THIS IS TOO MUCH
WELL DROWN ME IN A OCEAN O' SHEEP-DIP'
MILLIONS IN MY HANDS --HONEST MILLIONS-- AND I NEVER KNEW IT'
IT NEVER FAILS' EVERY TIME WOLFINGHAM TURNS TO CHEAT PEOPLE, HE BRINGS THEM LUCK AND CHEATS ONLY HIMSELF--THANKS TO YOU SUPERMAN
YIPPEE'
WE'RE RICH'

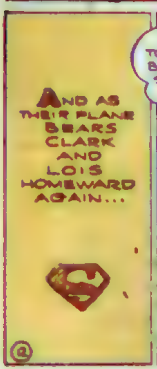
THAT NIGHT THE SHEEP RANCHERS CELEBRATE THEIR GOOD FORTUNE WITH A ROUSING BANQUET...
FRIENDS AN' STRANGERS, AS YUH ALL KNOW, WE ARE GATHERED HERE TO REWARD THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BEST LUCK THAT HAS HIT US SINCE WE WAS KNEE-HIGH TO A GOPHER..

MR WILBUR WOLFINGHAM,' IF HE HADN'T COME ROUND, SUPERMAN WOULDN'T'VE SHOWED UP. AN' NOTHIN' WOULD'VE HAPPENED.'
'— THE VERY LEAST THEY CAN DO IS OFFER ME A THIRD OF THE PROFITS FROM THE SILVER!'

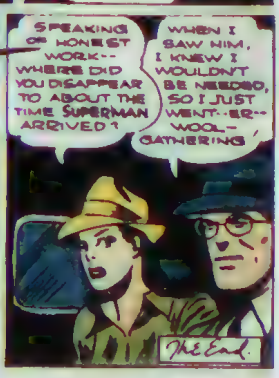
IN TOKEN O' OUR SINCERE APPRECIATION, SIR, WE CONFER ON YUH THIS MEDAL!
A-A MEDAL?...
SPEECH! SPEECH!
HOORAY!

LOOK-- HE'S PLUMB OVERWHELMED'
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN.'
RECKON HE AIN'T SUCH A BAD FELLER AT HEART, EVEN IF HE DID TRY TO PULL TH' WOOL OVER OUR EYES

BUT THE RANCHERS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE FULL DEPTH OF EMOTION THEIR GIFT HAS AROUSED IN WILBUR WOLFINGHAM...
WHAT! YOU WON'T GIVE ANYTHING FOR THAT FINE GOLD MEDAL'
MISTER, THIS AIN'T NO GOLD MEDAL.' IT'S A BRASS DOG TAG'


AND AS THEIR PLANE BEARS CLARK AND LOIS HOMEWARD AGAIN...

POOR WILBUR' HE TRIES SO HARD TO BE CROOKED, BUT HE NEVER SEEMS TO HARM ANYBODY BUT HIMSELF'
MAYBE IF HE'D TRY DOING HONEST WORK JUST ONCE, HIS LUCK, WOULD CHANGE


SPEAKING OF HONEST WORK-- WHERE DID YOU DISAPPEAR TO ABOUT THE TIME SUPERMAN ARRIVED?
WHEN I SAW HIM, I KNEW I WOULDN'T BE NEEDED, SO I JUST WENT-ER-- WOOL-GATHERING'
The End.

ADVENTURES OF "R.C." AND QUICKIE

CAPTURING COUNTERFEITERS
SAY, QUICKIE, LET'S GO IN THIS STORE A MINUTE I WANT TO GET SOME POSTCARDS
O.K. R.C. I WANT SOMETHING, TOO
I'M SORRY, SIR BUT I HAVE NO PRINTING INK IN THAT PARTICULAR COLOR. MUST IT BE EXACTLY THAT SHADE?
HMMM - THAT'S FUNNY - I WONDER
NUTTIN ELSE BUT —
HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? I THOUGHT YOU WANTED SOME POSTCARDS I WANT A ROYAL CROWN COLA
WE'LL GET BOTH LATER RIGHT NOW I WANT THAT TOUGH-LOOKING CUSTOMER STICK WITH ME QUICKIE
AH-AH- LET'S SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO
JUST AS I THOUGHT! COME ON, QUICKIE, WE'LL TAKE THIS JOINT OVER!
YOU GET ME INTO MORE TROUBLE
HEEL TO YOU, YOU HEEL! GRAB THAT OTHER BIRD, QUICKIE!
GOTTUM!
SAY, R.C., HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT BIRD WAS A COUNTERFEITER?
WELL, HE LOOKED PRETTY SHIFTY, AND THE SHADE OF GREEN INK HE WANTED EXACTLY MATCHED THE GREEN INK ON MY DOLLAR BILL - SO I HAD A HUNCH. LETS GO - I OWE YOU A TREAT!
THIS ROYAL CROWN COLA SURE IS A TREAT, "R.C."
THAT'S RIGHT, QUICKIE THERE'S NOTHING COUNTERFEIT ABOUT THIS IT'S THE BEST-TASTING COLA THERE IS, BY ACTUAL TASTE TEST
COWBOY "WILD BILL" ELLIOTT SAYS
THAT'S A FACT! IT DOES TASTE BEST!
"The world's best quick-up." That's what screen star Wild Bill Elliott calls tasty, delicious Royal Crown Cola! He took the famous cola taste test. After trying leading colas in paper cups, he chose Royal Crown Cola as best tasting! "Sweet for a fresh start," he says. Try it yourself today!
ROYAL CROWN COLA
Best by Taste Test!

HAYFOOT HENRY

SOME CROOKS REFORM AND SOME GET PARDONS, BUT NOT A HEEL WHO ROBS ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS AND PUTS AN INNOCENT TIGER TO INIQUITOUS USES LIKE STEALING JEWELS. FOR HIM THERE ARE NO EXCUSES! 'TIS WITH SUCH A VILLAIN THAT HENRY IS CONFRONTED, A THIEF WHOSE THEFT ON A BEAST IS SHUNTED, WHILE OVER SLEEPYSIDE STARK TERROR HANGS IN THE FEARFUL FORM OF FELINE FANGS! BUT NOWHERE ALL OVER THIS WHIRLING GLOBE WILL YOU FIND SUCH COURAGE, ALTHOUGH YOU PROBE FROM THE BANKS OF THE SWANNEE TO THE MOUTH OF THE NIGER, AS WHEN HENRY ATTEMPTS...

THE TAMING OF THE TIGER!

'TIS MIDNIGHT AT THE CITY ZOO! WHERE LION, LAMB, YAK AND GNU LIE CURLED ASLEEP IN FURRY MOUNDS AS WILLY THE WATCHMAN MAKES HIS ROUNDS...

SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE AT THE TIGER'S CAGE! THE VICIOUS BEAST'LL START TO RAGE!

ZOO

CLANG!

YOU THERE! I SAY — WHAT'S GOING ON?

GET BACK, YOU FOOL! YOU'D BETTER BEGONE!

AND NOW LET US SHIFT TO A SCENE OF TOIL WHERE HENRY THE COP BURNS THE MIDNIGHT OIL AS HE WORKS UPON HIS LEXICON OF RHYME AFTER A DAY OF FIGHTING CRIME...
PAGODA - A SACRED TOWER PURELY ORIENTAL BUT ITS ORIGINS ARE ONLY INCIDENTAL. WHAT RHYMES WITH IT IS FAR MORE FUNDAMENTAL -
THE TELEPHONE! MY BITTEREST FOE! ALWAYS INTERRUPTING - HELLO! HELLO.
HENRY, COME QUICK. THERE'S WORK TO DO! THERE'S SOMETHING ROTTEN AT THE ZOO! THE TIGERS JUST BEEN FREED FROM HIS CAGE BY A MAN I CAN'T HANDLE BECAUSE OF MY AGE!
HE'S FIGHTING TO STOP ME FROM PHONING - THE THUG! I RECOGNIZE HIM - IT'S THE TOWN'S TAXI - UGH!!
WHAT'S THAT? HELLO!' THE LINE IS DEAD' HE MUST HAVE BEEN STRUCK A BLOW ON THE HEAD'
AT THE ZOO IN RESPONSE TO THE CALL OF DUTY, HENRY FINDS WILLY, BUT NO SIGN OF THE BOOTY...
A MEAN BANG ON THE HEAD BUT HE'S FAR FROM DEAD. I'LL CALL THE DOCTOR AND GET HIM TO BED... 'TAXI' - THAT WAS THE LAST WORD HE SAID
BUT THERE'S BAD NEWS IN THE MEDICAL DICTUM THAT HENRY MUSTN'T QUESTION THE VICTIM...
HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, BUT I CAN'T SAY WHEN! A CONCUSSION IS HARDER ON OLDER MEN IT MAY BE DAYS TILL HE'LL SPEAK AGAIN!
THEN THE TOWN JEHU IS MY ONLY CLUE
BEFORE I GO, DO YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW WHAT RHYMES WITH PAGODA? IT PUZZLES ME SO!
ACCEPT MY REGRETS - I'M NOT POLYPHONIC. THE BEST I CAN DO IS PRESCRIBE A TONIC!
LATER - OUTSIDE THE CABBY'S COTTAGE...
IF THE CABBY DID IT, HE'S IN HIS DOTAGE! I CAN'T MAKE SENSE OF A CRIME SO INCREDIBLE. WHY STEAL A TIGER? IT'S COMPLETELY INEDIBLE.

BUT HENRY FINDS THAT HE'S TRAILED THE WRONG GUY, FOR THE CABBY HAS AN ALIBI!
IT'S BEEN OVER TWO DAYS SINCE I LAST WENT OUT BECAUSE, AS YOU SEE, I'M BOTHERED WITH GOUT
TRUE ENOUGH — THAT LETS YOU OUT, STILL — WHAT WAS THAT TALK OF A TAXI ABOUT?
AND SO IN THE PAPERS THE FOLLOWING DAY...
IF YOU SEE A TIGER, STAY OUT OF ITS WAY
TIGER FROM ZOO MAY BE HUNGRY FOR YOU HENRY SHORT-FELLOW IN CONFUSION, BUT PROMISES AN EARLY SOLUTION
BUT WHILE SLEEPYSIDE IS TORTURED WITH ANXIETY A GAY BALL DIVERTS ITS HIGH SOCIETY —
MY DEAR, YOUR EMERALDS LOOK LOVELY THEY'RE DIVINE. BUT THIS DISGRACEFUL TIGER BUSINESS — HENRY SHOULD RESIGN!
YOUR GORGEOUS STRING OF PEARLS, CAN THEY BE REAL? A TIGER — HUMPH — SUCH A SILLY THING TO STEAL!
BUT SUDDENLY — THE GAIETY CEASES! BRAVE MEN TREMBLE! WOMEN GO TO PIECES!
GUR-R-R-OWOOO!
EEEK! THE TIGER! I'M GOING TO FAINT!
MY DEAR — A LITTLE SELF-RESTRAINT!
FORTUNE DELIVER US! THE THING'S CARNIVOROUS!
WHILE IN THE BALL-ROOM PANIC ENSUES, HENRY THE COP GETS THE TERRIBLE NEWS.
GOODNESS GRACIOUS! I HOPE IT'S HAD LUNCH! IF NOT, IT MAY GOBBLE THEM UP IN A BUNCH. IT'LL BE THERE AT ONCE TO BATTLE THE BEAST BEFORE OUR BEST PEOPLE BECOME PART OF A FEAST!
WHEN HENRY ARRIVES AT THE SCENE OF PANIC, THE DANGER'S OVER BUT THE ANGER'S VOLCANIC!
THE HORR'D BEAST HAS FLED, BUT ITS CRIMES ARE ON YOUR HEAD
BUT SINCE NO ONE'S HURT, WHY SHOUT LIKE FOOLS?
WHY CAN'T YOU PROTECT US AND PREVENT SUCH HORRIED CRIMES? ARE YOU A POLICEMAN OR A GATHERER OF RHYMES?
AT LEAST NOW I KNOW WHY THE TIGER WAS TAKEN IT CREATES A PANIC SO A CROOK CAN REALLY RAKE-IN!

BUT WHO IS THIS CROOK? I MUST THINK THIS THROUGH
SOMETHING ABOUT A TAXI—A VERY PALTRY CLUE
MY RHYME FOR PAGODA, I FEAR, MUST WAIT,
UNTIL THIS VILLAIN MEETS HIS FATE!

SEEKING A SOLUTION, HE VERY AMBLES DOWN THE STREET,
HE PONDERS HIS HE WONDERS FOR HE WON'T ADMIT DEFEAT!..
-TAXI...TAXI..TAXI.. WHAT A FRUITLESS MENTAL BOUT—
WHY, HELLO, THERE—WHAT ARE YOU SO GLUM ABOUT?
POP'S BOSS IS COMING TO DINNER,
AN' I'VE LOST MY APPETITE
CAUSE EVERYTIME HE COMES,
MY MA MAKES ME RECITE!

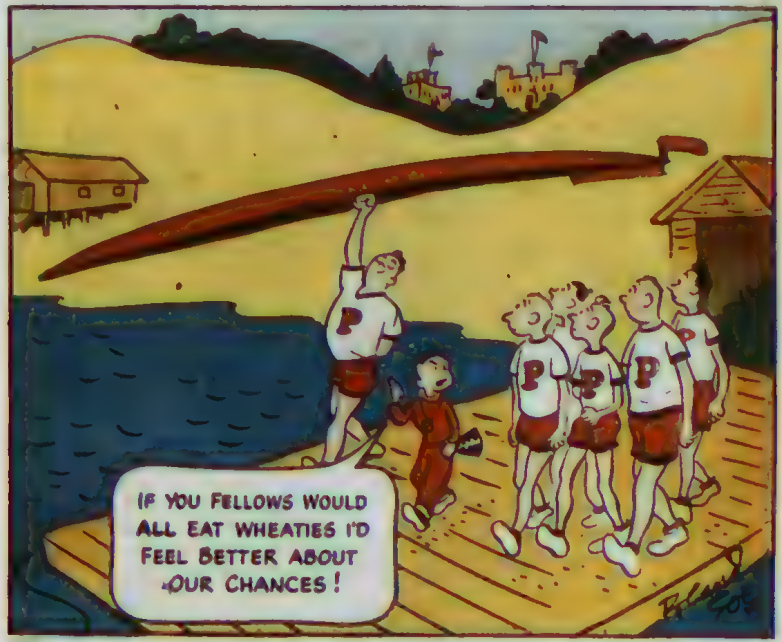
I HATE TO RECITE—I'D RATHER BE SMOTHERED
AIN'T IT ENOUGH JUST TO STUFF
THE OLD BUZZARD?
STUFF THE OLD BUZZARD! SHAME ON YOU, BERNIE! YOU SOUND LIKE A LECTURE ON TAXIDERMY. HUH! WHAT DID I SAY? TAXIDERMY! HURRAY!

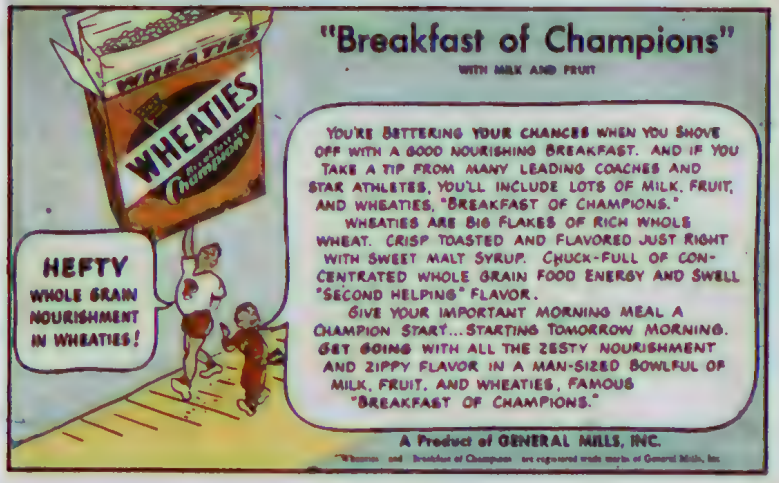
THE TOWN TAXIDERMIST WAS
WHAT WILLY MUST HAVE MEANT,
BUT THE WORD WAS CUT OFF
WHEN HIS HEAD RECEIVED THAT DENT;
AND I HEARD THE TAXIDERMIST
WAS HAVING TROUBLE WITH HIS RENT!
HERE'S HIS PLACE AND NOW FOR THE SHOWDOWN!
I'LL SOON TAKE CARE OF THE ORNERY LOW-DOWN—
HUH! JUST MY LUCK IF HE ISN'T IN, THOUGH.
BUT IN THAT CASE I'LL TRY THE WINDOW

GUESS HE ISN'T IN, BUT I'LL HAVE A LOOK AROUND
WHY—THAT'S FUNNY—I THOUGHT I HEARD A SOUND!
TAXIDERMIST

BUT SUDDENLY—A GRIM SURPRISE MAKES HENRY POP HIS EYES!
G-R-R-R-R-O-W-O-O-O
ULP! BE STILL MY TREMBLING KNEES! LET IT NOT BE SAID I'M A COWARD! STAND BACK, YOU FOOL HOTEL OF FLEES! I REFUSE TO BE DEVOURED!
4

EVEN WITH A TIGER THE BEST DEFENSE IS TO CHARGE RIGHT IN, SO LET'S COMMENCE! I'LL MAKE IT GIVE IN - WHA - ' IT'S ONLY A SKIN'
THERE GOES MY DISGUISE ' TO FLEE WOULD BE WISE
YOU'RE A PRETTY GOOD BLUFFER FOR AN ANIMAL STUFFER, BUT RUNNING AWAY'LL ONLY MAKE THINGS TOUGHER'
IF YOU THINK YOU'LL CATCH ME, THEN YOU'RE A FOOL' - A WITLESS, MENTAL MOLECULE '
HA! THINKS HE CAN FOOL ME BY SLIPPING IN THERE! BUT THIS TIME HE'S WALKING RIGHT INTO A SNARE!
HE'S GETTING AWAY - BUT WAIT - THAT TRAY'
TOO FAST FOR ME, BUT HIS FLIGHT I'LL CHECK WITH A SUDDEN COLD SHOCK ON THE BACK OF THE NECK'
YOW - I'M SHOT' I'M ON THE SPOT'
PLOP!
THROWN OFF BALANCE BY THE SUDDEN SHOCK, THE VILLAIN STUMBLES AND DROPS LIKE A ROCK'
I NEVER SHOT YOU, AS YOU'LL SOON DISCOVER, BUT NOW THAT I'VE GOT YOU, THOSE GEMS, HAND 'EM OVER '
AND TELL ME - THE TIGER YOU STOLE FROM THE ZOO WASN'T THAT A DANGEROUS THING TO DO ?
I USED CHLOROFORM, AND WITH THE TIGER'S HIDE I FRIGHTENED PEOPLE WHILE I HID INSIDE AND STOLE THEIR GEMS BUT IT HURTS MY PRIDE THAT A MERE CHOCOLATE SODA TURNED THE TIDE!
EUREKA' AMAZING' IT RHYMES WITH PAGODA WHAT A WONDERFUL THING IS A CHOCOLATE SODA'





"Breakfast of Champions"

WITH MILK AND FRUIT

YOU'RE BETTERING YOUR CHANCES WHEN YOU SHOVE OFF WITH A GOOD NOURISHING BREAKFAST. AND IF YOU TAKE A TIP FROM MANY LEADING COACHES AND STAR ATHLETES, YOU'LL INCLUDE LOTS OF MILK, FRUIT, AND WHEATIES, "BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS."

WHEATIES ARE BIG FLAKES OF RICH WHOLE WHEAT. CRISP TOASTED AND FLAVORED JUST RIGHT WITH SWEET MALT SYRUP. CHUCK-FULL OF CONCENTRATED WHOLE GRAIN FOOD ENERGY AND SWELL "SECOND HELPING" FLAVOR.

GIVE YOUR IMPORTANT MORNING MEAL A CHAMPION START... STARTING TOMORROW MORNING. GET GOING WITH ALL THE ZESTY NOURISHMENT AND ZIPPY FLAVOR IN A MAN-SIZED BOWLFUL OF MILK, FRUIT, AND WHEATIES, FAMOUS "BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS."

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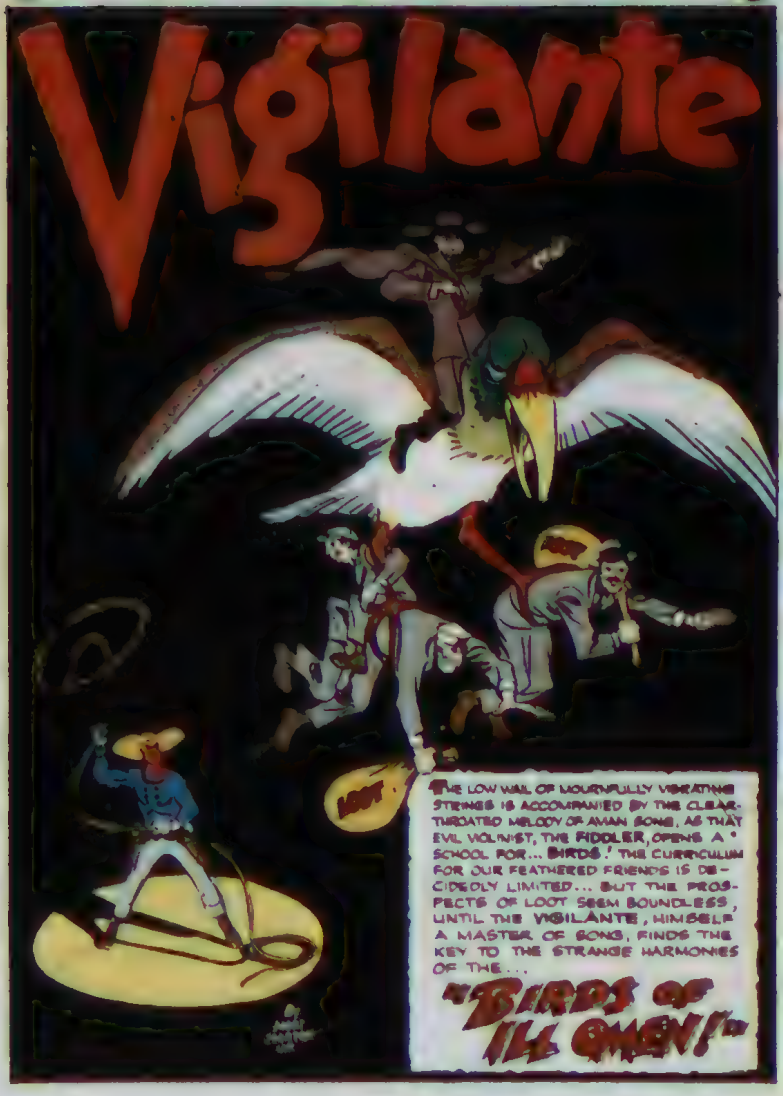
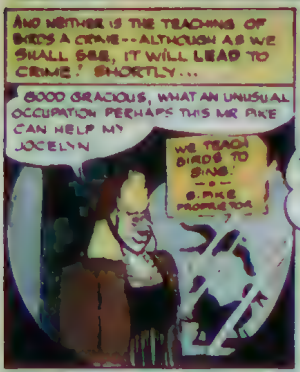

Vigilante
THE LOW WAIL OF MOURNFULLY VIBRATING STRINGS IS ACCOMPANIED BY THE CLEAR-THROATED MELODY OF AVIAN SONG, AS THAT EVIL VIOLINIST, THE FIDDLER, OPENS A "SCHOOL FOR... BIRDS!" THE CURRICULUM FOR OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS IS DECIDEDLY LIMITED... BUT THE PROSPECTS OF LOOT SEEM BOUNDLESS, UNTIL THE VIGILANTE, HIMSELF A MASTER OF SONG, FINDS THE KEY TO THE STRANGE HARMONIES OF THE...
"BIRDS OF ILL OMEN!"

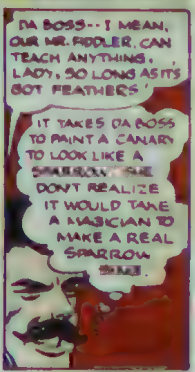
YOU HAVE OFTEN SEEN GREG SANDERS, THE PRAIRIE TROUBADOUR, SINGING THE SONGS OF HIS NATIVE WEST... BUT THIS TIME HE STRIPS A BIT OUT OF CHARACTER!
O-H-H L-H-O-H-H LEO-D-A-A-0000-O-A.
A SWISS YODELLING SONG, NO LESS! WELL, BECAUSE OF JOCELYN, AS GREG'S ART USUALLY IS!
MAGNIFICENT, MR. SANDERS,' I HAVE HALF A MIND TO ENGAGE YOU TO CONTINUE POOR JOCELYN'S NEGLECTED EDUCATION.'
YOU HAVE HALF A MIND TO WHAT!
TO TEACH POOR JOCELYN! AH, THESE SINGING LESSONS WERE COMING ALONG SO BEAUTIFULLY... UNTIL HER TEACHER UNACCOUNTABLY STOPPED COMING!
POOR ITSY-BITSY JOCELYN! JUST AS YOU WERE LEARNING TO WHISTLE YANKEE DOODLE... YOUR LESSONS HAD TO STOP!
HUH..? YOU WANT ME TO GIVE LESSONS TO THAT BIRD! NO, MA'AM, COUNT ME OUT!
LATER, AS GREG AND HIS PAL, STUFF, DISCUSS THE TROUBADOUR'S TROUBLES...
IMAGINE ASKING ME TO TEACH A HUNK OF FEATHERS AND A BEAK TO SING!
I KNOW, GREG -- SOME OF THESE WOMEN DON'T UNDERSTAND AN' ARTISTS' SENSITIVE FEELINGS!
WHEN SUDDENLY, THROUGH THE STILLY AIR, A SNATCH OF SONG...
YANKEE DOODLE WENT UPTOWN...
WHA..?
THAT'S A BIRD SINGING!
AND IT'S SINGING THE SAME TUNE JOCELYN WAS LEARNING! THIS IS FUNNY, GREG!
NOT ONLY FUNNY... IT'S BAFFLING, MYSTERIOUS, CURIOSITY-PROVOKING... UNTIL YOU LEARN THE AMAZING TRUTH THAT LIES BEHIND THOSE FEW CLEAR NOTES! BUT FOR THAT, WE MUST TAKE YOU BACK SOME TIME TO THE LAIR OF THE MAESTRO OF MUSICAL MENACE...
The Fiddler!
YANKEE DOODLE WENT UPTOWN...
AH, MY LITTLE ONES, YOU ARE LEARNING YOUR LESSONS VERY WELL. BUT I MUSTN'T CONFUSE YOU BY TEACHING YOU MORE THAN ONE SONG!

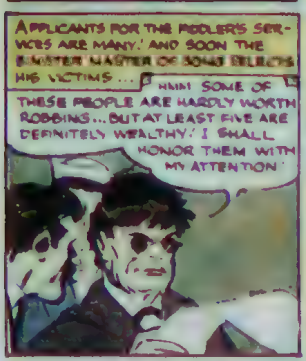
SO THAT'LL BE ALL FOR TODAY CLASS DISMISSED
CAP'N, I AIN'T FINDIN' FAULT WITH THE WAY YOU'RE NAVIGATIN'... BUT IT SEEMS TO ME WE'RE STEERIN' A BLIND COURSE.
THAT'S RIGHT, BOSS. WHATSA BIG IDEA LOSIN' THESE BOIDS? THEY KNOW HOW TO SING.

SPIKE, YOU HAVE NO IMAGINATION KINDLY CONTENT YOURSELF WITH OBEYING ORDERS.
OKAY, BOSS. BUT IT AIN'T NO CRIME TO BE CURIOUS.

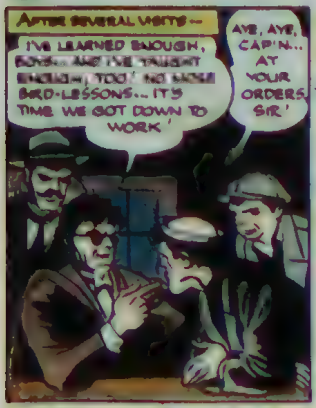

AND NEITHER IS THE TEACHING OF BIRDS A CRIME--ALTHOUGH AS WE SHALL SEE, IT WILL LEAD TO CRIME! SHORTLY...
GOOD GRACIOUS, WHAT AN UNUSUAL OCCUPATION PERHAPS THIS MR PIKE CAN HELP MY JOCELYN
WE TEACH BIRDS TO SING! --o-- S. PIKE PROPRIETOR

YOU AIN'T NEVER HEARD A SPARROW SING LIKE THIS BEFORE HAVE YA, LADY? IT JUST SHOWS WHAT EDUCATION CAN DO
INCREDIBLE. BUT IF YOU CAN TEACH A SPARROW, YOU SHOULD CERTAINLY BE ABLE TO TEACH MY JOCELYN.
YANKEE DOODLE-o-o

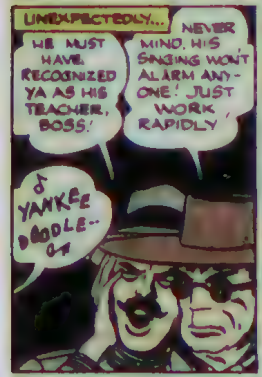

DA BOSS--I MEAN, OUR MR. FIDDLER, CAN TEACH ANYTHING, LADY, SO LONG AS IT'S GOT FEATHERS.
IT TAKES DA BOSS TO PAINT A CANARY TO LOOK LIKE A SPARROW. SHE DON'T REALIZE IT WOULD TAKE A MAGICIAN TO MAKE A REAL SPARROW SING.


APPLICANTS FOR THE FIDDLER'S SERVICES ARE MANY. AND SOON THE MINISTER MASTER OF SONG SELECTS HIS VICTIMS...
HMM! SOME OF THESE PEOPLE ARE HARDLY WORTH ROBBING... BUT AT LEAST FIVE ARE DEFINITELY WEALTHY. I SHALL HONOR THEM WITH MY ATTENTION.

AND SO THE FIDDLER MAKES THE ROUNDS OF HIS PRECIOUS PUPILS...
WHAT A GLORIOUS TONE
YES, MADAM, JOCELYN HAS REAL TALENT. IT'S A PLEASURE TO TEACH HER.


AFTER SEVERAL VISITS --
I'VE LEARNED ENOUGH, BOSS... AND I'VE TAUGHT ENOUGH, TOO! NO MORE BIRD-LESSONS... IT'S TIME WE GOT DOWN TO WORK!
AYE, AYE, CAP'N... AT YOUR ORDERS SIR!

BUT NOT EVEN THE FIDDLER CAN FORESEE EVERY POSSIBLE CONTINGENCY! THAT NIGHT...
THERE AIN'T BEEN A SOUND, BOSS!
EXCEPT OUT OF YOU! SHUT UP!


UNEXPECTEDLY...
HE MUST HAVE RECOGNIZED YA AS HIS TEACHER, BOSS!
NEVER MIND. HIS SINGING WON'T ALARM ANYONE! JUST WORK RAPIDLY!
♪ YANKEE DOODLE-O-I

ALL OF WHICH IS NEEDED TO EXPLAIN WHAT LIES BEHIND THE SINGING OF A SINGLE BIRD! A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY...
STUFF, I'M MIGHTY CURIOUS ABOUT THAT FEATHERED CRITTER!
I THINK THE VIGILANTE HAD BETTER INVESTIGATE

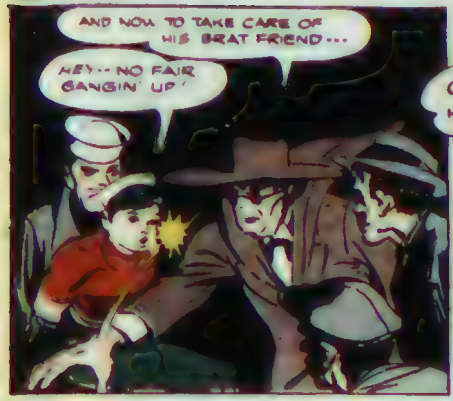
MY OLD FRIEND, THE FIDDLER!
MY OLD ENEMY, THE VIGILANTE!
KASH!

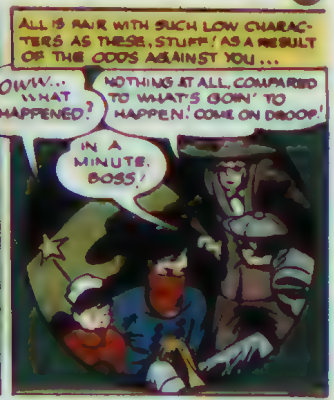
MY OLD PUNCHING BAG, SAILOR!
WHOOOO...

THIS'LL KNOCK DROOP FOR A LOOP!
BONK!

MISSED!
WATCH ME MAKE THIS BIRD SING, VIG!
YIPE!
BUT THE FIDDLER HAS MORE THAN ONE STRING TO HIS BOW! A SLUGFEST FOLLOWS FROM HIS FINGERS, AND UNEXPECTEDLY
YOU'LL DANCE TO MY TUNE, VIGILANTE, NOT I TO YOURS!
THAT'S BETTER...NOW I CAN BREATHE!
MORE'S THE PITY! BUT YOU'RE IN NO CONDITION TO HARM US NOW—WE'LL BE ABLE TO ESCAPE!
FAREWELL, VIGILANTE! NEXT TIME I'LL STOP YOU FROM BREATHING ALTOGETHER! OUT OF MY WAY, BEAT!
THE TUMULT AND THE SHOUTING HAVE AROUSED THE INTENDED VICTIMS AND AS THE STORY OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED IS RELATED---
LUCKY YOU WERE NEARBY, VIG!
LUCKY THAT BIRD OF YOURS BURST INTO SONG, PARTNER, OR THE FIDDLER'D HAVE GOT AWAY WITH THE LOOT!
WHAT'S THAT! YOU CAN'T MEAN THE MR. FIDDLER WHO WAS TEACHING GERALDINE!
I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED, MA'AM, IF IT'S THE SAME SIDEWINDER! IF YOU'LL ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS, MA'AM--
AND THE WHOLE AMAZING TRUTH COMES OUT!
THE SAME OLD FIDDLER, STUFF! TRICKY AND DANGEROUS AS A DIAMONDBACK!
BUT I'VE KNOW WHERE TO FIND HIM, VIG! LET'S HURRY!
5

THE WESTERN WADDY AND HIS PAL HASTEN TO THE FIDDLER'S RETREAT...
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE TOO LATE, VIG.' THE BIRDS HAVE FLOWN THE COOP
WE'LL TAKE A LOOK ANYWAY. STUFF' THEY MIGHT HAVE LEFT SOME CLUE TO WHERE THEY'RE GOING
BIRDS
WE DON'T LEAVE NOTHIN' BEHIND BOSS, ONLY AN EMPTY... HUH? THE VIGILANTE.'
THAT'S RIGHT! AN EMPTY CAGE -- HERE IT IS!
HOWDY, MY NAUTICAL FRIEND.
BLOW ME DOWN, VIGILANTE, BUT YOU'RE SUNK NOW!
SUNK? I GOT MY FEET ON SOLID GROUND, PARDNER... BUT YOU'RE SHIPWRECKED!
THE SAME GOES FOR YOU, COYOTE
MY POOR BIRDS NEED THIS SEED.. AND YOU NEED IT EVEN MORE, VIGILANTE.'
BIRD SEED

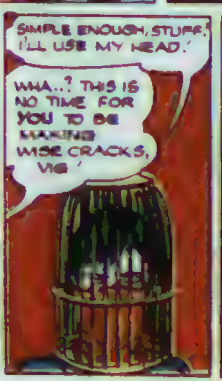

AND NOW TO TAKE CARE OF HIS BRAT FRIEND...
HEY-- NO FAIR GANGIN' UP!


ALL IS FAIR WITH SUCH LOW CHARACTERS AS THESE, STUFF! AS A RESULT OF THE ODDS AGAINST YOU...
OHHW... WHAT HAPPENED?
NOTHING AT ALL, COMPARED TO WHAT'S GOIN' TO HAPPEN! COME ON DROOP!
IN A MINUTE, BOSS!

SO YOU THOUGHT YOU WAS CASY, EH, VIGILANTE?

YOU WASN'T SO FAIR WRONG! HAW, HAW!

IT AIN'T SO FUNNY, STUFF! SMELL THAT SMOKE... THE FIDDLER MEANS TO BURN US ALIVE!
HUH..? WE'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE... BUT HOW?


SIMPLE ENOUGH, STUFF! I'LL USE MY HEAD!
WHA...? THIS IS NO TIME FOR YOU TO BE MAKING WISE CRACKS, VIG!

THAT'S NO WISE CRACK, PARDNER! THIS CAGE, DROOP PUT ON MY HEAD, HAS SOME SHARP WIRES... I CAN USE THEM TO CUT THE ROPES!

PRESENTLY, STUFF, FREED FROM HIS BONDS, RELEASES THE PUNCHING PERAMBAN ...
WE'RE STILL ALIVE, VIG... BUT WE HAVEN'T GOT THE FIDDLER!
THE VARMINT'S BEEN RUNNIN' IN LUCK! IT'S TOO LATE TO STOP THIS PLACE FROM BURNIN' DOWN AND DESTROYIN' ANY CLUES HE LEFT!
LOOK, VIG-- THE FIDDLER LEFT ONE OF HIS BIRDS BEHIND!
HE MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN IT IN HIS HURRY! WE CAN'T LEAVE IT HERE TO BURN!
VAMOOSE, AMIGO! SCAT!
HE'S TOO PANICKY TO FLY OUTSIDE, VIG! HE'S FLYING IN CIRCLES!
COME ON, CHUM... HEY, DON'T FLY SO FAST!
I'M TRYING TO CATCH YOU FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!
NO USE, PARDNER-- NO NEED TO RISK YOUR LIFE! I'LL GET HIM ALONE! YOU CALL THE FIRE ENGINES!
HUH..? HOW DOES VIG EXPECT TO CATCH THAT BIRD? HE SAID HE DOESN'T WANT ME TO RISK MY LIFE... WHICH MEANS HE'S RISKING HIS! I CAN'T LET HIM DO THAT!
JUST THEN, OUT OF THE BLAZING STORE--
FOR A MINUTE I WAS AFRAID I WOULDN'T MAKE IT!
WHAT HAPPENED? HOW DID YOU CATCH HIM?

EASY, STUFF... I JUST WAITED FOR THE SMOKE TO KNOCK HIM OUT, AND HE DROPPED RIGHT INTO MY HANDS!
WHA..! BUT DIDN'T YOU THINK THE SMOKE WOULD KNOCK YOU OUT, TOO?
I KNEW IT WOULD GET HIM FIRST! BIRDS BREATHE SO FAST THAT THEY'RE MORE SENSITIVE THAN HUMANS TO BAD AIR... THAT'S WHY CANARIES ARE USED TO DETECT POISON GAS!
GOSH, THAT'S RIGHT! BUT YOU WERE STILL TAKING A BIG CHANCE!
COULDN'T HELP IT, PARDNER! I KNEW THE FIREMEN WOULDN'T GET HERE IN TIME TO SAVE THE STORE, AND I COULDN'T LET THE LITTLE CRITTER DIE!
WELL, YOU SAVED HIS LIFE, VIC, BUT HE DOESN'T LOOK HAPPY!
SAY! I JUST REALIZED... HE'S A LOVEBIRD, AND LOVE-BIRDS COME IN PAIRS! HE MUST WANT HIS MATE!
KINOODLIN' COYOTES, STUFF, YOU'VE GOT SOMETHIN'! HE'LL LEAD US TO THE FIDDLER!
PRESENTLY...
THE CORD WILL KEEP HIM FROM GETTIN' AWAY, AND THE COLLAR AROUND HIS NECK WILL KEEP THE ROPE FROM CHOKIN' HIM!
NOW I HOPE HE KNOWS WHERE TO GO!
NO FEAR, STUFF! A BIRD'S SENSE OF DIRECTION IS A WONDERFUL THING... BLINDFOLD HIM, AND HIS INSTINCT WOULD STILL KEEP HIM GOIN' STRAIGHT!
GUESS WE'RE KIND OF CONSPICUOUS, VIC. PEOPLE AREN'T USED TO SEEIN' A BIRD ON A LEASH!
NO BLOODHOUND WOULD DO WHAT THIS FELLER'S DOIN'! LET 'EM STARE! WE'LL FOLLOW THE BIRD TO THE FIDDLER'S LAIR!

THROUGH CROWDED STREETS AND OVER LOFTY ROOFTOPS, THE WESTERN WADDY AND HIS PAL PURSUE A BIRDLINE STRAIGHT TOWARD THEIR GOAL! EVENTUALLY...
CLEVER PLACE FOR THE FIDDLER TO HIDE, VIG!
HE MUST THINK HE AND HIS BIRDS WILL SEEM TO BELONG IN THIS TREE.
HOWDY, FIDDLER.' LOOK WHAT SANTA CLAUS BROUGHT YOU'
WHA...' YOU SHOULD BE DEAD!
DEAD? NO, FIDDLER, I'M STILL ALIVE...
..AND NOT KICKING.
OW.' I'LL TAKE THE KICK OF A MULE ANY DAY.'
AND SO, SOME TIME LATER, WE FIND...
YANKEE DOODLE WENT UPTOWN...
BOSS, DIS MUST BE ONE OF YOUR PUPILS... HE'S GIVIN' US THE BOID.'
AND I HAD TO TEACH HIM HOW TO DO IT.' CURSE THE VIGILANTE.'

CHIEF HOT FOOT
HEAP GOOD IDEA - THIS THING CALLED SCARECROW !
ME SEE-UM EVERYWHERE IN FIELDS !
CHIEF HOT FOOT ALSO USE-EM SCARECROW FOR HIS CROPS !
EAGLE-BEAK SEE YOU STANDING IN FIELDS FOR HOURS ! WHAT'S HEAP BIG IDEA ?
ME HAVE-UM NO OLD CLOTHES TO MAKE-UM SCARECROW, SO CHIEF STAND HERE LIKE ONE !

SUPERMEN OF AMERICA

SUPERMAN'S SECRET MESSAGE

(Code Pluto No. 8)

I OWWL UMUJMZ WN BPM ACXMZUIV KTCJ NQ. OPBA XIXMZ EIABM. LW GWC?

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c o ACTION COMICS,
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Capt. TOOTSIE and the TOY CANNON
THE WICKED DR. HARSTY WHO LOVES TO MAKE SMALL CHILDREN UNHAPPY IS PLOTTING MISCHIEF!
I'LL TAKE THAT LITTLE CANNON AND
SOOTHE BOOTS AS SOON AS I'VE MADE A FEW MORE IMPROVEMENTS ON IT!
BOOTS, BOOTS
WHEN BOLLO TOOTS FOR TOOTSIE CAPTAIN TOOTSIE LOWERS A RANSOM!
HA, HA, HO, HO, HO! I'M GOING TO BLAST HIS WITH A LOVELY BULLET! HA, HO!
HEH HEH NO I'LL NOT BECAUSE CAPTAIN TOOTSIE HAS ALWAYS WITH THAT LOVELY MILK WHICH YOU CAN'T EAT TOOTSIE ROLLS ARE ENERGY
TTP
BUT BOLLO AND THE SECRET LEGION COME TO THE RESCUE
TAKING SALS!
POW!
CURSES! MUST FLEE!
NOT SO FAST DR. HARSTY WE'LL BE YOU BACK TO PEACEFUL AGAIN!
BOY, WE SURE HAVE EATING TOOTSIE ROLLS REGULARLY! THEY GIVE US THE EXTRA ENERGY TO HELP OUR CAPTAIN!

KID BROTHER

By Joseph Greene

THE moment Danny Miller saw his brother's face, he knew they were in for trouble. Johnny had a grim look about him, his eyes were twin pinpoints of light. Johnny nodded to him, walked across the room to the window. He held his hands stiffly at his sides, his fingers knotting themselves into fists. He stood there looking down into the street for a long time.

"What's the matter, Johnny?" Danny asked.

"Nothing," Johnny replied.

"Don't tell me that it's nothing. I can see it in your face. You're not in with the mob again, Johnny, are you?"

Johnny shook his head. "It's got nothing to do with you, kid. I told you I'm going straight and I meant it. I served my time in the big house. Now I'm starting out with a clean slate. Nobody's going to drag me back in to the mob—not even Vince Mullins."

"So that's it," Danny remarked.

"Yeah," Johnny said, "that's it. A couple of Vince Mullins' torpedoes saw me in the street. They told me the boss was looking for me."

"You're not going back to him, are you, Johnny?" Danny asked, pleadingly.

"No," Johnny replied. "I'm not going to see him."

"I'm glad of that," Danny said. "We can be together again now, just like when I was a kid."

Johnny Miller glanced at his kid brother and his face relaxed into a smile. "What do you think you are now," he asked.

"I'm fifteen, going on sixteen," Danny replied. "I'm not a kid anymore."

Johnny patted his shoulder. "That's right. You're not a kid anymore, but I still have to look after you. I'm going to do it too. Nobody is going to—"

There was a knock on the door. Johnny grew tense.

"Who's there," Johnny asked.

From behind the door a muffled voice replied, "An old pal of yours, Johnny. Open up."

"It's Puggy," Johnny whispered. "Vince Mullins' trigger man. I'll see what he wants."

He opened the door and Puggy stepped in grinning. "Hiya, Johnny," he said, "glad to see you outa the big house."

"Glad to be out," Johnny replied.

"Gotta job? The boss is interested. He wants to see you."

"I gotta job starting next week," Johnny said. "And I'm going straight—so there's nothing I got to talk to Vince Mullins about."

Puggy grinned. "You drop in to see him anyway. There ain't no hurry, you know. The boss is the kind of guy who can wait. But don't forget, he can get impatient too. Get what I mean?" He looked hard at Johnny.

"Yeah, I get what you mean. Tell him I'll be around to see him tonight."

"Okay," Puggy replied. "So long."

When they were alone again, Danny pleaded, "Don't go to see Mullins."

Johnny looked at his kid brother. "Ain't you forgetting something, Danny? You're the kid brother, I'm looking after you."

"I know, Johnny," Danny replied. "But gee, you got a bad temper. You're liable to do something."

"I'm not going to lose my temper, kid." He turned his back and walked into the bedroom. Danny watched him closely. He saw his brother open a drawer and take out a small automatic. Quickly, he thrust it into his pocket. When he came out Danny pretended to be interested in a newspaper.

(Continued on inside back cover)

"I won't be gone long, kid," Johnny remarked. He picked up his hat and started for the door. Then he turned back. "You wait for me here. When I come back we'll go see a movie. What do you say, kid?"

"Sure," Danny answered. "I'll wait for you. And don't lose your temper."

Johnny smiled, stepped out and closed the door behind him. The moment he was gone, Danny grabbed his hat, and listened at the door until Johnny's footsteps faded away. Then he opened the door and followed him.

All the way to Vince Mullins' apartment, Danny kept his eyes fixed on his brother. He watched Johnny go into the swank apartment house, waited a few minutes and then followed him inside. He watched the elevator indicator until it stopped at the number three. Then he dashed up the stairs.

Out of breath, he looked down the long hallway, just in time to see his brother enter one of the apartments. When the door closed, Danny crept along the corridor. He couldn't hear what they were saying at first. Then their voices grew louder.

"You're not going to rope me in again, Mullins," Johnny was shouting.

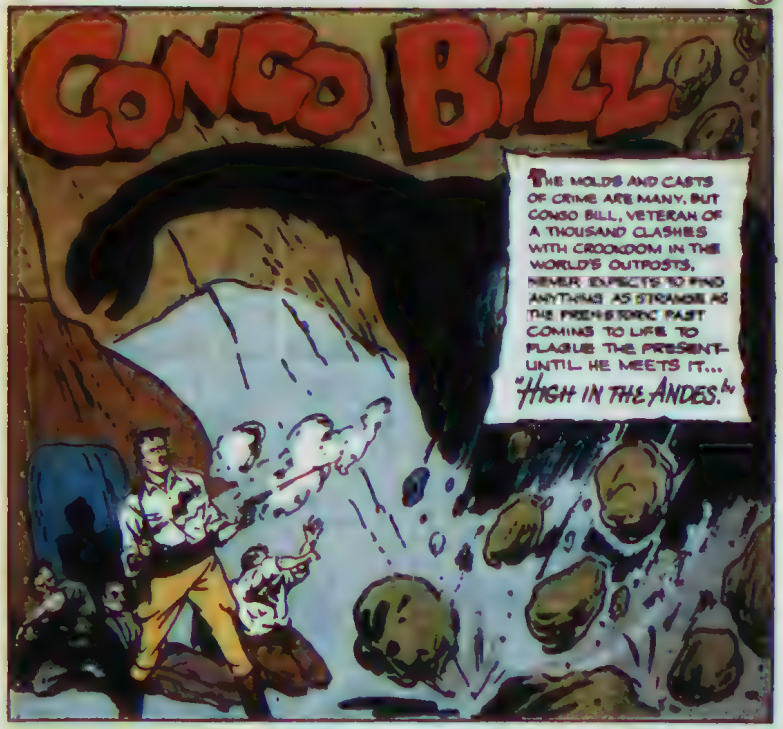
"Listen, punk. You're going to do what I tell ya," Mullins replied, "or I'll break you."

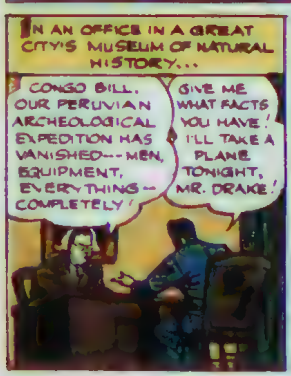
"I'll kill you the moment you try to pull something," Johnny threatened.

Danny stood outside the door, listening to the quarrel. He didn't know what to do. Then he made up his mind—he would go in there and stop Johnny before he lost his temper! He grasped the door knob. But just as his hand touched it, there was a shot in the room. Danny froze suddenly.

He whispered, "Johnny's

CONGO BILL


THE MOLDS AND CASTS OF CRIME ARE MANY, BUT CONGO BILL, VETERAN OF A THOUSAND CLASHES WITH CROOKDOM IN THE WORLD'S OUTPOSTS, NEVER EXPECTS TO FIND ANYTHING AS STRANGE AS THE PREHISTORIC PAST COMING TO LIFE TO PLAGUE THE PRESENT— UNTIL HE MEETS IT... "HIGH IN THE ANDES."


IN AN OFFICE IN A GREAT CITY'S MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY...
CONGO BILL, OUR PERUVIAN ARCHEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION HAS VANISHED--MEN, EQUIPMENT, EVERYTHING--COMPLETELY!
GIVE ME WHAT FACTS YOU HAVE! I'LL TAKE A PLANE TONIGHT, MR. DRAKE!

THE EXPEDITION WAS DIGGING PREHISTORIC FOSSILS IN THIS WILD MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRY! STRANGE RUMORS HAVE REACHED OUR EARS...
WHAT ARE THEY?

FANTASTIC STORIES OF PREHISTORIC MONSTERS STILL ROAMING THAT REGION!
HMM... I'VE BEEN THROUGH THAT COUNTRY, BUT NEVER HEARD ANYTHING LIKE THAT! WELL, I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO!

TWENTY FOUR HOURS AND THREE THOUSAND MILES LATER...
ODD, THE EXPEDITION VANISHING... AND THAT PREHISTORIC MONSTER STUFF...
DAYS THROUGH WILD AND RUGGED COUNTRY FOLLOW-AND EVER, AS THE INTREPID INVESTIGATOR DRAWS NEARER HIS GOAL...
QUEER... NO TRAIL IN THESE PARTS. BUT THE SIGNS SHOW SOMEONE'S ALWAYS JUST A LITTLE AHEAD OF ME.'
SUDDENLY, THE STILLNESS OF THE HIGH ANDES IS SHATTERED.'
I THINK I'LL SPEED UP AND... WHA--.'
BUT AS CONGO BILL SEEKS SHELTER TO SPY OUT HIS UNKNOWN ASSAILANT...
DROP THE ROD, CONGO BILL.'
SLICK WORK, HAVIN' BLACKIE DRAW THIS SNOOPER'S FIRE, AN' US COMIN' AROUND IN BACK, TRIGGER.'
TRIGGER CARSON, EH! ALL AROUND RENEGADE AND INTERNATIONAL NUISANCE.'
THEN, LIKE A STEEL SPRING...!
WELL, WELL, TRIGGER, HOW'S STUFF? TUT, TUT. DON'T ANSWER, I SEE YOU'RE OUT OF BREATH.'
OOF!
LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN TAKE IT.'
UHH!
BUT THE NEXT MOMENT...
A NICE LITTLE HUNDRED-FOOT DROP, AN' THAT'S THE END OF CONGO BILL. HA, HA.'
GOOD WORK, ALF.'

ROCKS! I'LL BE SMASHED!
WH... WHAT!! WHY, IT-- IT'S WATER-- MUD!
GIANT MUD BUBBLES ON A VOLCANIC SINK HOLE, AND NOT A FIELD OF ROCKS!-- BUT I'M A GONER ANYWAY!
BUT TWO SUFFOCATING MINUTES LATER.
LUCKY THE MOVEMENT OF THIS COOLED MUD IS UPWARD! THAT ACCOUNTS FOR THOSE ROCK-LIKE BUBBLES!
AT DUSK...
GO NO FURTHER, CONGO BILL! UP THERE WALK THE GREAT ONES OF ANOTHER AGE!
THAT MONSTER BUSINESS, EH?
SORRY, TALTEC, I'M PUSHING ON! THANKS FOR THE FOOD AND THE CLEAN-UP
NIGHT FINDS THE LONE TRAVELER ASCENDING...
WHAT WAS THAT SOUND?
GRRUMPH
A DINOSAUR!

TYRANNUS REX, THE PREHISTORIC FLESH EATER.. IT JUST CAN'T BE.'
AND A PREHISTORIC PTERODACTYL-WHUPS, THAT ONE WING IN THE MOONLIGHT LOOKS A BIT FLUKEY... HMMM... I WONDER...
GOOD THING I RETRIEVED MY GUN ON THE CLIFF.
DEAD CENTER SHOT--AND THE WINGED BEAST CRUMPLES LIKE A TOY BALLOON!
SO THAT'S IT, IS IT? OKAY, MY FLYING FRIEND, I'LL EXAMINE YOU IN THE MONING. I THINK I'VE REACHED THE END OF MY JOURNEY.'
NEXT MORNING...
JUST AS I THOUGHT-- INFLATED RUBBER-- TO SCARE OFF THE NATIVES' AND THIS IS ABOUT WHERE THE EXPEDITION VANISHED'
YES, HERE ARE THE DIGGINGS -- BUT WHERE ARE THE MEN AND EQUIPMENT?
THERE'S GOT TO BE A PASSAGE SOMEWHERE-- HMM... THIS WALL SEEMS TO GIVE.'

THE WALL SWINGS INWARD ON HIDDEN HINGES...
A TUNNEL!
AND AS CONGO BILL EMERGES FROM THE OTHER END...
AN AZTEC OFFERING POOL! PROBABLY HAS A FORTUNE IN JEWELS AND GOLD ON ITS BOTTOM--TOSSED IN BY ANCIENT WORSHIPPERS AS GIFTS TO THEIR DEITIES!
SUDDENLY...
YOU'RE TRAPPED, SNOOPER!
AND THIS TIME HE WON'T GET AWAY
I THOUGHT I'D FIND YOU HERE, TRIGGER!
PARDON ME IF I TAKE MY MORNING DIP!
THAT WON'T GET YUH NOTHIN', WISE GUY--- C'MON, MEN!
HA, HA, SOME AIM--SHOOTIN' IN TH' AIR!
HE CAN'T HOLD OUT LONG!
IF I CAN SHOOT AWAY THE BASE OF THAT BALANCED ROCK...!
THEN, WITH A THUNDEROUS ROAR...!
L-LOOK!
HE STARTED A LAND-SLIDE!
YOU FELLOWS CATCH ON QUICK!
THAT'S RIGHT--GET SMART AND GET IN THE SHELTER OF THIS POOL LEDGE--BUT NO GUNS, PLEASE!
HE'S GOT THE BEAD ON US--THERE AIN'T NO CHOICE!
HALP!

IT'LL STOP IN A MINUTE...
DON'T TRY ANYTHING, ANY OF YOU!
MINUTES LATER...
I'VE GOT THE PICTURE, TRIGGER-- YOU SKULKED AROUND THE EXPEDITION. SAW THEM FIND THIS POOL, CAPTURED THEM, GOT FAKE ANIMALS TO SCARE THE NATIVES, AND YOU'VE BEEN LOOTING THE POOL EVER SINCE! WHERE ARE THOSE MEN?
SUDDENLY, TRIGGER DRAWS A HIDDEN GUN, BUT BILL IS ALERT.
HELD OUT A GUN, EH! WHERE ARE THOSE MEN!
OWW! DON'T--I-I'LL TELL!
LATER...
THEY TOSSED OUR EQUIPMENT DOWN A BANK, THEN FORCED US TO DIVE FOR THESE TREASURES-- THE POOL'S DEEP--KEEPING US IN THIS AZTEC STORE ROOM BETWEEN TIMES!
THEY WERE RETURNING FROM A PROVISION TRIP AND SPOTTED ME-- THEY'RE A SLIPPERY LOT!
STILL LATER, AT THE PORT AUTHORITY...
WATCH 'EM, SIR-- AND YOUR GOVERNMENT HAD BETTER SEND DIVERS FOR THE REST OF THE POOL TREASURE!
WE SHALL, CONGO BILL-- MEANWHILE, THANKS A MILLION!
PORT AUTHORITY
I WISH TO STATE THAT THE BEST RADIO SHOWS COME FROM THE BEST COMICS!
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ZATARA
THE MASTER MAGICIAN

YOU THOUGHT IT COULD NEVER HAPPEN, BUT IT **HAS**! IT'S TRUE... AT LAST THAT MYSTIC MAN OF MARVELS, ZATARA, MEETS HIS MATCH IN JOLLY PETER PAUNCH, WHO LAUGHS AND LEADS HIS LOOTING GANG OF CROOKS, UNSCATHED BY GUNS OR MAGIC, TO CAPTURE EVEN THE AMAZED ZATARA HIMSELF! BUT IS THIS THE END? CAN THE CAPTIVE WIZARD BREAK THE SPELLS THAT BIND HIS POTENT POWERS AT A TIME...

"WHEN MAGIC FAILS!"

LAUGHING PETER PAUNCH, AS SLICK A "CONFIDENCE" MAN AS EVER SOLD THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE, HAS JUST CLOSED ANOTHER DEAL...

BOY, WILL I MAKE A FORTUNE ON THIS STOCK!

HA, HA! JUST SOLD HIM SOME FAKE GOLD-MINE STOCK! BUT HIS GOLD IS MOSTLY IN MY POCKET! HO, HO!

HA! HA! WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH NERVE TO PULL A HOLDUP? HO, HO! I'LL STICK TO TRICKS AND TALKING... AND MY LAUGHING WAY KEEPS COPS AWAY! HA, HA!

A HOLDUP! HO, HO! BUT THERE'S ZATARA... ONE **BIG** REASON WHY CRIME DOESN'T PAY!

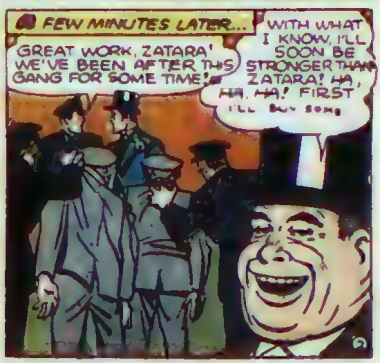
YA SEE? I TOLD YA ZATARA'D HEAR US! COME ON, LET'S LAM OUTTA HERE!
YOU'VE INTERRUPTED MY ACT... BUT I'LL CONTINUE IT HERE!
NEXT WEEK

SGEL TSIWT!*
I'M A CORKSCREW!
HA! HA! GLAD I'M NO REAL CROOK!
*READ EACH WORD BACKWARDS!

TSKCIT RSNCHUP HCNUP!
HERE'S A COUPLE OF TICKETS TO DREAMLAND!
HO, HO! THIS IS FUN!

BUT AS PETER PAUNCH HOLDS HIS HEAD IN MIRTH...
WHAT'S THIS..? THE MAGIC STOPS WHEN I HOLD MY HANDS OVER MY EARS! BUT THOSE OTHER THUGS STILL BEHAVE AS THOUGH THE MACHINE IS PUNCHING THEM!

EROM SKCOS!
I'VE GOT IT... I'VE DISCOVERED ZATARA'S SECRET! HE CAN ONLY WORK HIS MAGIC ON PEOPLE WHO HEAR HIS WORDS!


A FEW MINUTES LATER...
GREAT WORK, ZATARA! WE'VE BEEN AFTER THIS GANG FOR SOME TIME!
WITH WHAT I KNOW, I'LL SOON BE STRONGER THAN ZATARA! HA, HA, HA! FIRST I'LL BUY SOME

BUT HAS PAUNCH DISCOVERED THE KEY TO ZATARA'S STRENGTH... AND CAN HE REALLY DEFEAT HIS POWERS? LATE THAT SAME DAY...

SO DA COPS GOT CHARLIE'S MOB.. DAT MAGICIAN'LL HAVE US ALL IN JAIL!

HA, HA! NO HE WON'T GENTLEMEN! JUST LISTEN...

IT'S DAT GABBIN' PHONEY, PETER PAUNCH! HE AINT NEVER HELD A GUN IN HIS LIFE!

NO BUT I HAVE A BRAIN.. AND I'VE NEVER BEEN IN JAIL! HO, HO! AND... I KNOW ZATARA'S SECRET!

WOT? DIS GUY'S LIGHT IN DA HEAD,

HA, HA! OBSERVE GENTLEMEN... MY INVENTION TO DEFEAT ZATARA'S MAGIC!

YUH MEAN... YUH KIN BRING CHARMS AN' SPELLS FRUM DAT BOX?

YES.. AND I CAN SHIELD YOU ALL FROM THE MASTER MAGICIAN! HA, HA!

WE COULD HANDLE DA COPS... BUT DAT MAGIC UV ZATARA'S..

NEVER FEAR! ZATARA WILL BE HELPLESS ... AND I SHALL BE YOUR CZAR OF CRIME! HA HA!

IS HE TELLIN' DA TRUTH? KIN WE TAKE A CHANCE?

SUPPOSE WE TEST MY MY POWERS IN BROAD DAYLIGHT... RIGHT UNDER ZATARA'S EYES!

OK... BUT YA BETTER DELIVER, PAUNCH... OR ELSE!

YOU JUST PROVIDE THE GUNS... I'LL FURNISH THE BRAINS AND THE MAGIC! HO, HO! ABACADABRA... USE THESE MAGIC CHARMS AS I COMMAND!

MINUTES LATER...
HERE'S THE BANK TRUCK. BUT BE READY WITH THAT MAGIC! (HO,HO' PRETTY SOON, I'LL HAVE THESE GUYS BELIEVING I'M HOUDINI'
BOY.. HAS ZATARA GOT A SURPRISE COMIN' HE WAS EVEN NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE'

REACH FER DA CLOUDS!
WHAT..?
HA,HA! PERFECT... NOW GET THE CASH'

LOOK, NO COPS! BUT HERE COMES A GUN-TAMER!
ALL RIGHT, MEN! MY INVENTION FOR THE PREVENTION OF ZATARA'S MAGIC! ABRACADOO... MY MAGIC STOPS!

HEY WHAT'RE THEY DOING? THEY'RE NOT AFRAID'
WE HAVE MAGIC...HA, HA! ZATARA CAN WATCH THIS HOLDUP...BUT HE CAN'T STOP IT!

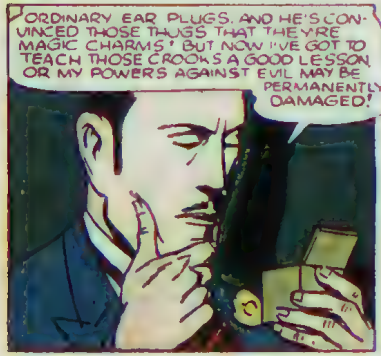
I DEFY YOU, ZATARA! HA, HA! THIS WILL BE FUNNY'
YOU THINK SO, EH? SNUG EB YVAEH! PORD!

AHA! HO, HO! HA, HA! NOTHING HAPPENS'
PAUNCH'S IDEA WORKS.. WE'RE SAFE!
BUT THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE! MY WILL...THE MAGIC WORDS...

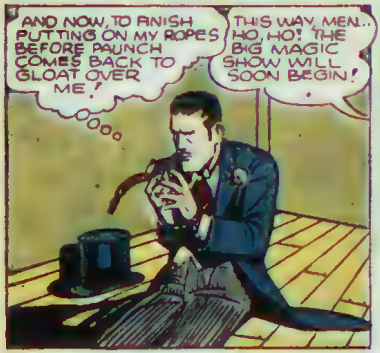
BEWILDERED, THE MASTER MAGICIAN TRIES AGAIN...
NEM LLAF NWOD!
ABRACADOO! HA! HA! I'M A BIGGER WIZARD...I'M FATTER! HO, HO!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND... MY MAGIC WORDS ARE USELESS!
HA HA! FROM NOW ON I COMMAND! PAUNCH IS THE MASTER MAGICIAN! CAPTURE THIS FAKE!
LIGHTS OUT, ZATARA!
AHH...!
GEE, DAT WAS A SNAP... GOOD T'ING ZATARA NEVER PACKS NO ROD!
INTO THE CAR WITH HIM! HE'LL HELP ME RECRUIT AN ARMY OF CRIME! HA, HA, HA!
WE'RE SAFE NOW! REMOVE YOUR MAGIC CHARMS AND PUT THEM BACK IN MY BOX OF SPELLS! HA, HA!
YOU'RE DA CHIEF PAUNCH! WHATEVER YOUR MAGIC IS, IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR US
HO HO! ABRACADABRA... ABRACADOO! I GIVE YOU PAUNCHE'S MAGIC WORDS!
BOSS, YOU'RE A WONDER!
THROW HIM IN THERE!
AN' WE USTA BE SCARED OF DIS GUY'S HOCUS-POCUS! HAW, HAW!
MY TRAINED WOLF HOUNDS, BORIS AND IVAN, CAN WATCH OUR PRISONER! AND MY MAGIC... HO, HO! I PUT IN THIS SAFE!
OOOHH MY HEAD! AND WHAT'S THIS PAUNCH PUTTING SOMETHING INTO A SAFE...

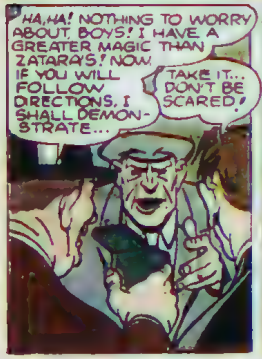
MY MAGIC WORDS FAILED... BUT I HAVE MORE THAN ONE TRICK IN MY BAG!
GRRR!
GRR...WOOF!
EASY, BOYS! LOOK AT ME... LOOK!
SATARA'S POWERFUL WILL AND EYES CREATE VISIONS IN THE FIERCE HUNTERS' MINDS!
MY BONDS... THEY'RE BONES! BONES!
CHEW THEM! GNAW MY ROPES! AHA, MY MAGIC'S WORKING! THAT'S A FRIENDLY BARK!
ARF!
NOT MY HANDS... JUST THE ROPES! GOOD BOYS!
YOUR REWARD... SOME REAL BONES! AND NOW TO SEE WHAT STRANGE CHARMS PAUNCH USED AGAINST ME!
NOT MUCH OF A JOB TO OPEN THIS SAFE! HMM... SO THAT'S IT! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!


ORDINARY EAR PLUGS, AND HE'S CONVINCED THOSE THUGS THAT THEY'RE MAGIC CHARMS! BUT NOW I'VE GOT TO TEACH THOSE CROOKS A GOOD LESSON, OR MY POWERS AGAINST EVIL MAY BE PERMANENTLY DAMAGED!

I'VE GOT IT...I'LL FIX PAUNCH SO THAT HE'LL BE THE LAUGHING STOCK OF ALL CROOKDOM!


AND NOW, TO ANISH PUTTING ON MY ROPES BEFORE PAUNCH COMES BACK TO GLOAT OVER ME!
Ooo.
THIS WAY, MEN... HO, HO! THE BIG MAGIC SHOW WILL SOON BEGIN!

IT'S TRUE...HE CAPTURED ZATARA!
YEAH, BUT HE'S TIED! I AIN'T SO SURE... ZATARA IS A PRETTY SMART GUY!


HA, HA! NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, BOYS! I HAVE A GREATER MAGIC THAN ZATARA'S! NOW IF YOU WILL FOLLOW DIRECTIONS, I SHALL DEMONSTRATE...
TAKE IT... DON'T BE SCARED!

YA MEAN...DIS MAKES US SAFE FROM DA MAGICIAN? JUS' DIS?
OF COURSE... AND I'LL PROVE IT! EVERYBODY READY?

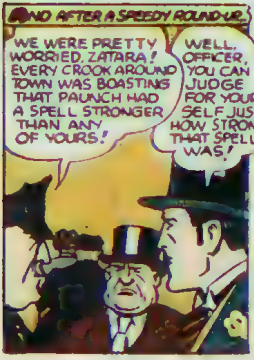
HO, HO! DON'T BE FRIGHTENED, BOYS! HIS MAGIC IS USELESS!
STAND STILL ... DOSE HANDS AND EYES DON'T MEAN NUTTIN' NOW!

WELL, PETER PAUNCH YOU HAVE QUITE A GATHERING HERE TO WITNESS YOUR HOUR OF TRIUMPH! AND NOW FOR THE CELEBRATION... NWO STSIF TIH NRM.'

EXCUSE ME... BUT I GOTTA DO DIS!'
HEY, SOMETHING'S WRONG! I HEAR ZATARA'S MAGIC WORDS!'

HCNUP HCNUAP!
DIS IS A PLEASURE! YA FAT PHONEY... LEADIN' US INTA A TRAP!'.
FOR ONCE, I CANNOT SUMMON A LAUGH!

AND AS ZATARA UTTERS A MAGIC COMMAND
WORHT YAWA RUOY SSELESU CIGAM!'
PAUNCH'S MAGIC NEVER WOIKED AT ALL... ZATARA WAS ONLY PLAYIN' TRICKS ON US!'
AN HERE'S DA COPS!'


AND AFTER A SPEEDY ROUND-UP
WE WERE PRETTY WORRIED, ZATARA! EVERY CROOK AROUND TOWN WAS BOASTING THAT PAUNCH HAD A SPELL STRONGER THAN ANY OF YOURS!
WELL, OFFICER, YOU CAN JUDGE FOR YOURSELF JUST HOW STRONG THAT SPELL WAS,'

BUT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND... AND JUST WHEN I THOUGHT I HAD ZATARA LICKED!

PETER PAUNCH WILL NEVER KNOW JUST HOW CLOSE HE REALLY CAME TO DISCOVERING PART OF MY SECRET. IF I HADN'T PUNCHED HOLES IN THOSE EAR-PLUGS, THE STORY MIGHT HAVE HAD A VERY DIFFERENT ENDING!

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done it! " He waited outside the door for Johnny to come running out. But the door remained closed. He turned the handle and stepped in. He was just in time to see Johnny going down the fire-escape. On the floor, Vince Mullins was lying face down. Not far from him lay Johnny's gun.

"He killed him," Danny whispered to himself. Carefully he closed the door behind him. "I've got to do something to save him," he said to himself. But what? Suddenly an idea came into his head.

"Johnny's got a record. If the cops ever suspect him, he hasn't got a chance. But me, I'm just a kid. They'll never send me to the chair!" He picked up the gun and wiped it clean with his handkerchief. Then he grasped it firmly, making sure his fingerprints would be on it. He closed the window leading to the fire-escape. For a moment he stared at Vince Mullins lying there on the floor. Then he stepped to the phone and called the police.

Detective Blades was a hard copper. He looked it too. He stared at Danny with his cold, expressionless eyes. "Okay, kid, let's have that story, again."

They were still at Vince Mullins' apartment house, but in another room. A coroner was examining the body in the library. He was alone with Detective Blades in the bedroom.

"This guy Mullins was after my brother," Danny said. "He sent one of his torpedoes over to the house to try to force Johnny to go crooked again. Johnny was going straight. He got a job too!"

"Never mind the soft soap. Go on with your story."

"Well, I knew he wasn't going to let Johnny alone. So I took the gun—just for protection. I didn't mean to kill him. Then I came over here. I tried to talk to him. I told him to lay off my brother. But he wouldn't. He said he was going to see to it that Johnny lost his job and any other job he'd get. He said he was going to break Johnny. So I took out my gun. I only meant to threaten him, give him a scare. But he made a grab for me and I shot him. He just dropped down at my feet."

"You're lying," Blades said. "You're covering up for your brother!"

"Johnny don't know nothing about this," Danny said desperately.

"Yeah?" replied Blades. "We will see about that."

"Why don't you leave him alone?" Danny said. "If you pick him up, he'll lose his job. He's out on parole now, you know."

"Yeah, I know," Blades replied. "When I pick him up, his parole is off. He's going back to the big house."

"Give him a break," Danny pleaded. "He's trying to make good. Haven't ya got a heart?"

"Sure I got a heart," Blades replied. "But my heart ain't lookin' out for rats like your brother."

"He ain't a rat," Danny quickly retorted. "And don't call him that. He had nothing to do with this—"

"You're a liar, kid! Maybe you think you're covering him up, but you're not doing your brother any good. And you're going to make a criminal out of yourself! Why don't you tell me the truth, kid?"

"But I killed him," Danny insisted.

Just then the door opened and the coroner stepped into the room. Blades looked up at him. The coroner nodded his head. Blades walked over to him. The coroner was a short man and Blades leaned over as the coroner whispered something into his ear. Blades threw a sharp glance at Danny and he looked at the coroner.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"Absolutely," the coroner replied. "Take a look at the wall yourself."

"I will," Blades said. He walked into the room with the coroner. A few minutes later he returned. "Okay, Danny," he said. "I get the whole set up now."

"You believe me, don't you? You know I killed Vince Mullins."

Blades grinned at him. "Are you trying to frame yourself into the chair, kid?"

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I said, kid. For a moment you had me puzzled. Now I know that your brother Johnny did not kill Vince Mullins."

"That's what I've been telling you all the time," Danny said.

"Yeah," Blades replied. "I also know you didn't kill him either. Johnny had a fight with Vince Mullins. He wanted to go straight and Vince wanted him back in the mob. Is that right? Maybe Johnny even wanted to kill Mullins."

Danny feared a trap. He remained silent.

"It's okay, kid. I'm not trying to pull a fast one on you. I'll tell you the rest. They did have a fight and Johnny must have taken a shot at him. Only he missed. The bullet's in the wall. But he sure must have scared Vince Mullins, scared him to death."

"How can a guy scare somebody to death?" Danny asked, puzzled. "It can't be done."

"It can in this case," Blades continued, smiling. "Vince had a bad heart. A shot coming in the middle of a violent quarrel was too much for his ticker. He dropped dead. And Johnny must have thought that he killed him. So he scrammed fast. I don't know how you got here, kid. You must have thought that Johnny killed him too, and that's why you wanted to take the rap for him."

"What you said is true," Danny whispered, hoarsely. "What are you going to do to Johnny?"

"Nothing," Blades said. "Vince Mullins died of a heart attack. That's what my report is going to read."

Danny looked up at him, "Thanks," he said.

"Okay, kid. Beat it. Tell Johnny not to worry."

Danny got up quickly. When he reached the door, he stopped and turned. "Thanks again," he said.

Detective Blades was watching him with narrowed eyes. "Forget it, kid. You're the kind of kid brother I'd like to have myself."

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